

NYS IPM Project Annual Report

Project Title: Improving Field Crop Extension connectivity and outreach through enhanced in-season communication

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Project Start: 5/3/2018 **Project Term:** 12/31/2018

Report Fiscal Year: 2018

Executive Summary

Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE) educators are Cornell University's front line in helping New York field crop producer clientele with crop production and pest management issues. Keeping CCE personnel informed on the latest information and developments helps us meet Cornell's high standards for extension outreach and provides clientele with quality, pertinent, timely and user-friendly programs and resources that maximize our educational impacts. Enhancing communication opportunities between CCE county and campus personnel helps strengthen the outreach network, and is an important component of CCE's professional development. This year marked the 11th year of the call series, involving 23 conference calls held between 5/3/18 and 10/4/18. Each 45 minute call averaged 14 participants. As a result of these conference calls, participants were better equipped to conduct their outreach efforts and meet the field crop pest management needs of their stakeholders. Enhanced communication among CCE personnel, Cornell faculty and NYS IPM staff with field crop responsibilities improved the effectiveness of outreach efforts regarding timely pest and crop management issues. In addition to direct communication during the conference call, topics discussed were summarized and highlights made available to other stakeholders weekly through on-line NYS IPM Weekly Pest Report blogs. Articles from the Weekly Pest Report are frequently used in various extension newsletters and other media including Facebook and Twitter postings with an estimated outreach of 5,000 plus subscribers. End of season surveys and discussions with participants were very positive with much interest and support to continue the conference call series in 2019. And, for the first time since the inception of these weekly in-season calls, the group decided to expand into the off-season with calls that would each focus on specific topics relevant to field crops pest and disease management. For those calls, guest speakers were invited from various organizations including Cornell University, NYS IPM NEWA, Bayer/Monsanto, CCE, and the Institute for Resource Information Sciences (IRIS).

Issue

County and regional CCE field crop educators are Cornell University's front line in helping New York field crop producer clientele with crop production and pest management issues. Keeping CCE personnel informed on the latest information and developments helps us meet Cornell's high standards for extension outreach and provides clientele with quality, pertinent, timely and user-friendly programs and resources that maximize our educational impacts. Regular communication between CCE staff, NYS IPM staff and campus faculty helps strengthen the outreach network, and is an important component of CCE's professional development. CCE personnel translate knowledge gained from these educational opportunities into outreach materials and other resources to effectively meet needs of clientele.

Integral to regular communication and team building is an open exchange of information between individuals with varying levels of experience. Seasoned experts are able to help new

extension personnel gain a statewide perspective of production issues and opportunities in real time. Regular dialogue provides a forum for review and discussion of new information and technologies, including strengths, weaknesses, and advantages of adoption. Frequent communication assures our unified vision and strengthens our consistent outreach message. These exchanges are often instrumental in helping to identify applied research needs, local demonstration opportunities, and the development of outreach resources and programs.

Progress Summary

This year marked the 11th year of the in-season call series. In 2018, 23 weekly conference calls were held between 5/3/18 and 10/4/18 to improve campus and field staff communication regarding field crop pest and crop management issues during the growing season. Each call averaged 14 participants and lasted 45 minutes. Additionally, due to an overwhelming request from participants, the calls were expanded into the off-season via monthly conference calls with targeted guest speakers held on 11/1/18 and 12/6/18, with an average of 13 participants and lasted 45-60 minutes.

Enhanced in-season communication improved the effectiveness of outreach efforts regarding timely pest management issues and recommendations. In addition to direct communication during the conference call, topics discussed were summarized and made available to all subscribed stakeholders through 23 on-line NYS IPM Weekly [Pest Report](#) blog posts available at the NYS IPM Program field crops [website](#) and through Cornell's [fielcrops.org](#) blog. The Weekly Field Crop Pest Report 2018 reached over 450 subscribers directly via blog and list-serves, and over 2,500 more with reposts to [other newsletters](#), Facebook and Twitter. Subscribers and stakeholders include statewide CCE staff, Cornell faculty, crop advisors, scouts, industry representatives, and agribusiness associates.

This year's call was particularly effective in communicating timely in-season information on pest activity such as outbreaks of soybean soilborne diseases, black cutworm in corn, western bean cutworm damage in corn, potato leafhopper in alfalfa, weed identification and management, soybean cyst nematode, Anthracnose top-dieback vs. tassel heat stress of corn, soybean white mold, and small grain diseases. End of season discussions with participants confirmed overwhelming support and interest to continue the conference call series in 2019, and to expand the call into the off-season with monthly calls focusing on targeted topics on pest and disease management. Targeted topics for 2018-19 off season calls include NEWA tools for field crops, Dicamba regulatory updates, Soybean cyst nematode updates, Gene editing and regulations, Improvements to IPM apps, and Economics of pest management in field crops.

Expected and Observed Impact

The expected impact of this effort was to improve the timely statewide communication of pest management and crop production among field crop CCE, faculty and NYS IPM personnel during the growing season, and now expanded into the off-season with a modified format.

Since 2008, CCE and NYS IPM staff and Cornell faculty with field crop responsibilities took advantage of the weekly opportunity to share observations, gain insights, acquire and present practical knowledge and technical information in an in-house professional development environment. These timely efforts enhanced field crop extension personnel communication and

awareness on current pest and crop conditions. In addition, the timely forum allowed for discussion of anticipated pest, crop and weather issues, integrated pest and crop management and potential extension and research programming opportunities. The majority of those involved participated every year with new extension field staff joining in the discussions along the way. A total of 25 individuals have actively participated and contributed to this projects' success over its 11-year duration. Project evaluations each year have documented that participants highly value the timely updates, discussion, professional development and team building aspects of the conference calls which could then be used to increase potential extension outreach impacts with stakeholders. Surveys also indicated that Cornell field crops staff and faculty feel that this conference call series is the most appreciated contribution from the NYS IPM field crops and livestock program, highly benefiting all participants.

The primary benefit of the conference call program lies in the enhanced communication and professional development of the extension personnel involved. Stakeholders ultimately benefit from this effort through the potential enhanced extension outreach impacts related to an increased timely awareness of pest issues, pre-emptive monitoring and management of potential pest problems that help grower stakeholders minimize or avoid pest impacts, better address pesticide use decisions and protect net profitability.

Weekly calls provided regular access to input from Cornell faculty field crop specialists, Gary Bergstrom (plant pathology), Elson Shields (entomology), Quirine Ketterings (nutrient management) and Margaret Smith (plant breeding). Weekly Field Crop IPM Conference Calls included an in-depth weather outlook (Northeast Region Climate Center), participant sharing of statewide field pest and crop observations, general project updates and timely discussion on particular pests and diseases, followed by a review of the following week's pest watch list. The weather outlook was provided by Jessica Spaccio and others from the Northeast Climate Center. Highlights of current pest status discussions were summarized for inclusion in the "View from the Field" feature of the NYS IPM Weekly Field Crop Pest Report [blog](#). The target audience for this on-line newsletter are field crop professionals including producers, extension, agribusinesses, consultants, federal, state and local personnel and the general public. Articles from the Weekly Pest Report are frequently used in various statewide extension newsletters and other media including Facebook and Twitter postings. The Weekly Field Crop Pest Report 2018 reached over 450 subscribers directly via blog and list-serves, and over 5,000 more with reposts to other newsletters, and re-tweets to Facebook (700 followers) and Twitter (433 followers).

The 2018 growing season was marked by an extended cool and wet spring, followed by a hot and dry summer, and a very wet fall across most of the state. These conditions affected the timing of crops being planted, crop maturation and yields, as well as the ability to get many fields harvested. Soilborne soybean diseases, including Fusarium Wilt, Sudden Death Syndrome, White Mold, and Northern Stem Canker were of particular concern in many parts of NY. Soybean downy mildew and soybean aphids were also problematic in many areas, prompting many questions on whether or not to spray. Western bean cutworm damage to corn caused economic losses on some hybrids in Northern and Western NY, and the populations of western bean cutworm continue to increase statewide. True armyworm and black cutworm were a problems in many corn, small grains and some grass hay fields in across NYS. Though mycotoxins were lower than average in small grains this year, mycotoxins in silage were higher than normal in some regions.

Weekly calls helped CCE field crop personnel keep informed on current status of statewide pest issues and provided a forum for detailed discussions on a variety of topics including: updates on the Fusarium Head Blight prediction model and fungicide use decision making (wheat), corn fungicide use considerations, western bean cutworm updates on risk to sweet and field corn and dry bean, weed management recommendations and decision making, vertebrate damage to field crops, sharing of timely resources and field monitoring reminders. Articles were written for specific pests, diseases and weeds of concern in any given week and were disseminated within the weekly pest report. These articles were further circulated through county and regional newsletters and via Cornell's fieldcrops.org blog and Facebook page.

A Google survey tool was used to collect end of season program evaluations. Evaluations were very positive with participants reporting the conference calls were a very worthwhile, helpful experience, increased participant awareness of current field issues, provided pertinent timely information critical for outreach and identified a "go-to" person or resources if additional information was needed.

Project Conclusion:

2018 marked the 11th year of this project. Participation in these calls is entirely voluntary, and the duration of this project speaks to the value of the commitment made by participants and the outcomes of participation. The objective of this effort is to improve the timely statewide communication of pest and crop production management issues among field crop CCE personnel during the growing season. Feedback from surveys of participants are overwhelmingly positive, and these calls will continue into 2019 with expansion into monthly off-season calls. Results of one official survey are outlined in the Appendix of this report.

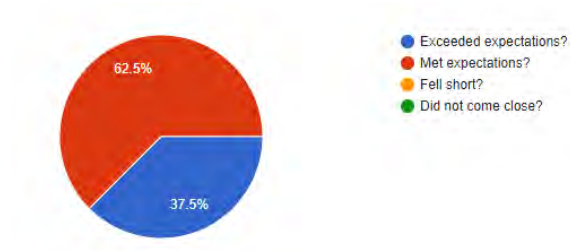
Over the 11 seasons of field crop conference calls, CCE personnel, Cornell faculty and NYS IPM staff with field crop responsibilities contributed to this weekly opportunity to share observations, gain insights, acquire and present practical knowledge and technical information in an in-house professional development environment. These timely efforts enhance communication and knowledge by field crop extension personnel (educators and faculty) and the collective awareness on current pest and crop conditions. Dairy cattle pest management issues of timely significance were also discussed on occasion. In addition, the timely forum allows for discussion of anticipated pest, crop and weather issues, integrated pest and crop management; including reviews of problem identification, assessment and management alternatives, and identification of research and resource needs and potential extension programming opportunities.

The Weekly IPM Field Crop Pest Conference Call successfully continues to strengthen communication by actively engaging up to 25 CCE, faculty and IPM field crops specialists in timely conversation about current pest observations and issues. These efforts have enhanced the field crop extension team effectiveness and our ability to anticipate, prepare and respond to seasonal pest management challenges. In addition, the calls have contributed to professional development and team building of this extension network.

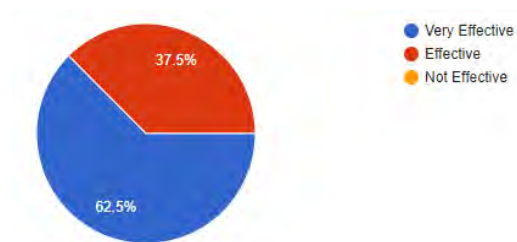
Appendix: 2018 NYS IPM Field Crop Weekly Conference Call Evaluation Summary

The goals of our 2018 NYS IPM Field Crop Weekly Conference Call series were to “Improve timely statewide communication of pest management and crop production among field crop CCE personnel during the growing season.”

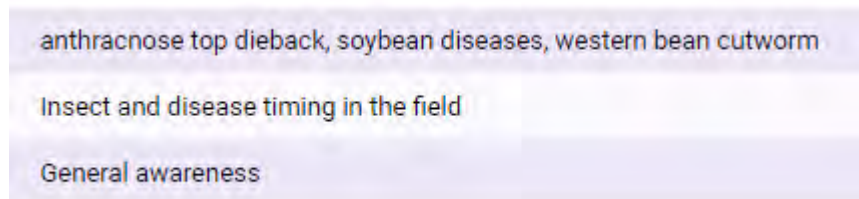
How well have we met our goal this season? (N=8)



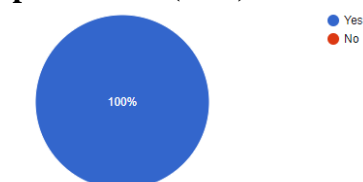
Was the conference call a good medium for timely statewide communication of CCE Pest Management information? (N=8)



Were there one or two items discussed during the conference call that helped you make an impact with producers or clientele?



Would you recommend participation in these field crop conference calls to other CCE personnel? (N=8)



Do you have any suggestions on how to strengthen involvement by other CCE educators?

We need a weed scientist (Russell's position) filled again.

Seems like most field crops folks are already tuning in

just spread the word through all normal channels

What did you like the most about the NYS Field Crop Weekly Conference Call?

weekly communication with colleagues during the hectic season

The timeliness of issues presented.

county updates

I get to hear expert advice

Listening to the expertise and experience of the other field educators and the faculty.

What did you like the least about the NYS Field Crop Weekly Conference Call?

when no one has anything to say or update the group with.

The weather report is needed, but I have a hard time listening to any long rambling weather report. I would like the weather report to explain the big picture of what is happening and why.

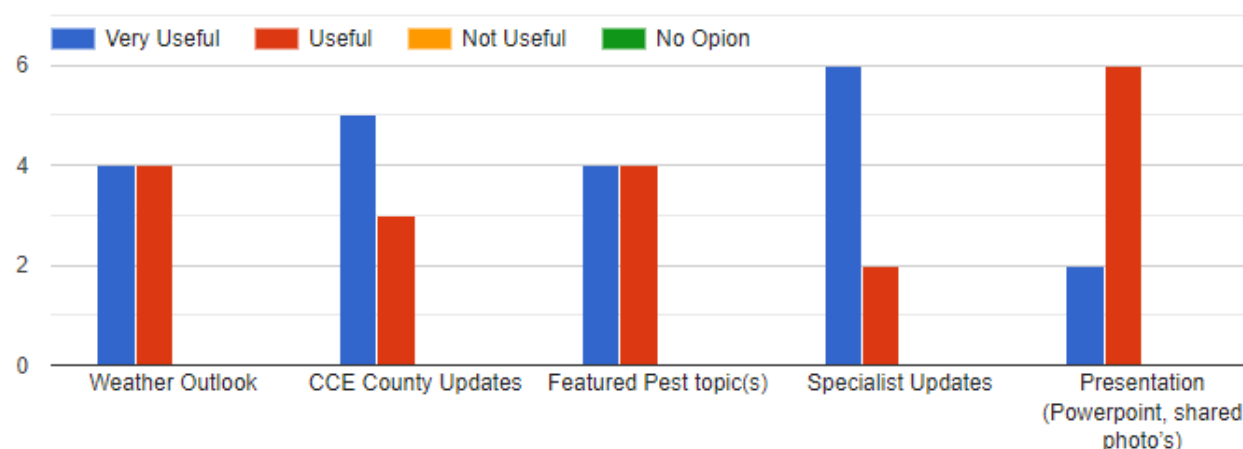
Was the 8:30 - 9:15 am Thursday a convenient meeting time? (N=8)



The meeting length was: (N=8)



**We are interested in your assessment of the following components of the Conference Call.
(N=8)**



Do you have any specific comments or suggestions to improve next season's NYS IPM Field Crop Weekly Conference Call series to better suit your field crop IPM extension needs and those of your clientele?

submit topics for discussion in advance

I like it the way it is.

Do you have any suggestions for additional pest management or professional development topics to be subjects for off-season field crop conference calls?

apps issues

Updates with where faculty positions are at related to IPM, current research being done on relevant topics in our regions and at campus level. We need to stay informed.

Future pest management programming? We would like to ask for your input regarding needs, opportunities and priorities for field crop or livestock pest management related research and extension. Please take a moment to share your thoughts and suggestions:

updated field crops pest/disease resources

Help Toni DiTammo's with their current research and update the weed resistance chart for New York. Management practices related to these resistant weed issues.

What do you see as the most important pest(s) or pest management issues/challenges you and/or your clients will face in the next 5 years?

WBC, SCN, white mold

Palmer amaranth, waterhemp, marestail, herbicide moa's-soa's not working anymore

more herbicide resistant weeds i.e. marestail, tall waterhemp, palmer amaranth

herbicide resistant weeds

Organic and non-GMO markets

It is hard to keep up with all the products and if they really are effective. I am not convinced the 250 dose of seed applied insecticides are helpful.

Are there specific field crop pest management areas you feel need additional extension efforts, resources?

white mold, scn

Waterhemp, Palmer amaranth, soybean cyst nematode/gall midge? , slugs in no-till systems